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January 2005

Volume 3, Issue 1

NEWS FROM THE 42ND DISTRICT

Assemblyman's Message

Welcome to my "News From The 42nd District," my eNewsletter designed to help keep you informed of what's happening in the State Capitol and the 42nd District. This "mini-issue" covers the budget, new laws you should know about, and a community organization profile. We are finally into the 2005-06 session, and things are off to an interesting start. I hope you find the information in this newsletter helpful and interesting!

Community Calendar

[January, 2005](#)
[February, 2005](#)
[March, 2005](#)

2005-06 Budget Update

On January 10th, Governor Schwarzenegger released his 2005-2006 Budget Plan, his second spending blueprint to be considered by the State Legislature. Traditionally, the January release of the Governor's Budget is merely a starting point -- the first step in the months-long budget process. But his nearly \$100 billion budget proposal has already caused a lot of concern around the state.

The Governor's proposed budget contains \$86.9 billion in available General Fund resources, \$85.7 billion in General Fund expenditures, and a \$500 million reserve (plus \$641 million reserved for encumbrances). The proposed budget includes a total of \$9.1 billion in solutions to close the Governor's projected General Fund gap.

The budget includes a number of borrowing and deferral proposals, in addition to a broad set of budget reform proposals to place on the ballot as constitutional amendments. According to the non-partisan Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO), the Governor's proposal has "several positive attributes" but "falls well short of fully addressing the state's ongoing projected fiscal imbalances." The LAO notes that its budget reform proposals "would put more future state spending on 'cruise control' and hamper the ability of future policy makers to establish budget priorities."

The LAO goes on to point out that the Governor's 2005-06 budget proposal "addresses the 2005-06 budget shortfall primarily through program savings in K-12 education, social services, transportation, and employee compensation. The plan also relies on about \$1.7 billion of the remaining Proposition 57 deficit-bond proceeds, and contains various other funding shifts and borrowing. It assumes some additional revenues from expanded tax auditing, but does not propose new tax increases."

In addition, the Governor has also called the Legislature into special session to consider several structural budget reforms relating to the budget process, public employee pensions, transportation funding, and Proposition 98 (K-14 education) funding. The Budget Bill has been introduced in the Legislature (AB 90, Laird) and it is now up to the Legislature to analyze, debate, and craft the budget by the June 15th Constitutional deadline and in time for the start of the new fiscal year on July 1, 2005.

Anyone interested in reviewing the Governor's Budget in detail may do so at the following web site: [California State Budget](#).

CAL-GRANT APPLICATIONS

In February, a month-long series of Cash for College workshops will be conducted across the state to assist students and their parents in filling out financial aid applications. The workshops are an excellent way to determine if you are eligible to receive a Cal Grant and to make sure that your applications are completed accurately.

For more information on the Cal Grant Program, high school students should either go to the [Cal Grant Website](#), contact their college counselors, or call the California Student Aid Commission at 1-888-224-7268. **Applications are due on March 2, 2005.**

TRANSITIONING HEALTH CARE:

HEALTH CARE ACCESS AND THE TRANSGENDERED COMMUNITY

Please Join Assemblyman Paul Koretz and other California leaders in discussing healthcare for transgender people

FRIDAY, February 4th

6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

The Village at Ed Gould Plaza

1125 N. McCadden Place

(one block east of Highland, just north of Santa Monica Blvd.)

To RSVP or for more information, please contact:

Nicole Curran at (310) 285-5490

National Council of Jewish Women, Los Angeles

National Council of Jewish Women, Los Angeles is the LA Chapter of a 90,000 member national organization. The Los Angeles chapter has a membership of 1200.

Founded locally in 1909, NCJW/LA is a non-sectarian, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that addresses the critical social, economic and political realities facing women and their families. Inspired by Jewish values, NCJW/LA strives to improve the quality of life for women and children through community service and social action programs. All NCJW/LA programs are volunteer-based and promote personal empowerment. The following are NCJW/LA's current services:

WOMEN HELPING WOMEN SERVICES

- Assists women to address such problems as poverty, domestic violence, depression, unemployment, single parenthood and child abuse.
- Provides **individual and family counseling, case management and support groups**, all on a sliding scale, and staffs a **Counseling Talkline** with trained paraprofessional volunteer counselors.
- Maintains an **Emergency Survival Fund** to assist women and their families in crisis, and advocates on behalf of client issues such as welfare reform and domestic violence.

WOMEN HELPING CHILDREN

NCJW/LA assists homeless and high-risk children, teens and teen mothers to succeed in school and develop life skills via these programs:

- **Tutoring & Enrichment Programs**, tutoring homeless children in shelters and community centers;
- **Teen Mother Literacy**, tutoring/mentoring teen mothers as they complete high school, explore job options and improve decision making skills;
- **ArtPals and ABC** (Art Bridges Cultures), delivers weekly hands-on art projects, discussions and slide shows to children in public elementary schools where art programs have been eliminated due to lack of funding;

➤ **Light Up a Library**, addressing the critical unmet library needs of elementary school children by refurbishing and staffing underused libraries; and,

- **After School Homework Connection** provides an educational and safe environment to encourage self-motivated homework completion with assistance available if needed.

ADVOCACY

- advocates on issues such as childcare for working women, protection for victims of domestic violence, reproductive freedom and improved public education;
- contacts NCJW/LA members via email with important information regarding Federal and state Legislation, Judicial appointments and other pertinent political happenings;
- participates with the national organization and other chapters on "Lobby Day" trips to Washington D.C.



NCJW/LA also runs **COUNCIL THRIFT SHOPS** throughout the City. Cited by the Los Angeles Times as "the best thrift store in L.A.,"

NCJW/LA's network of 7 stores and

Fabulous Flea Market events generate the major portion of NCJW/LA's operating budget for community services. They accept gently used donations of clothing furniture, antiques, collectibles, appliances, cars, etc., either by drop-off or fast, free pick-up service. Donors receive an itemized tax credit receipt. In addition to the revenue generated by the thrift stores, NCJW/LA supports its programs and services through private monetary donations and several grants for non-profit organizations.

Recently, NCJW/LA hired a new Executive Director, Hillary Selvin, and the former CEO of the West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce.

National Council of Jewish Women, Los Angeles is located at 543 North Fairfax Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90036. Tel 323-852-8528; Fax 323-651-5348; Web. www.ncjw.org

TSUNAMI RELIEF FUND: DONATIONS DEDUCTABLE UNTIL JANUARY 31ST, 2005

Since the disaster, the American Red Cross has responded to the tsunami disaster with incredible compassion and generosity. Many have already stepped forward making donations. Money donated for tsunami relief through January 31, 2005, can be deducted from 2004 income taxes (per US House Resolution 241, signed by the President on January 7, 2005). If you would like to help the tsunami victims suffering from the devastating earthquake that hit South Asia on December 26, 2004. Different options for donating to the American Red Cross are listed below.

Mail your donations to: American Red Cross of Greater L.A., 2700 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90057 or in the San Fernando Valley at 14717 Sherman Way, Van Nuys, CA 91405

Via telephone: Call (213) 739-5200 (L.A. Office) or (818) 376-1700 (Valley Office); For Spanish speakers: (800) 257-7575

On-line donations: You may click on the provided link to the Red Cross website and have the opportunity to donate online at American Red Cross.

New Laws You Should Know About

As we reported in our last newsletter, Governor Schwarzenegger signed 959 bills since taking office in November 2003. Below is a sampling of those new laws which could impact you or your family. A complete list can be found at www.governor.ca.gov under Press Releases.

CONSUMERS



AB 1721 (Koretz) Price Overcharges -- Stores must now charge the lowest price posted or advertised for a product in a store, even if the sign carries an expiration date.

AB 2193 (Nation) -- Children younger than 14 will no longer be able to patronize tanning salons. Tanning salon owners may be fined up to 2500 per day for each violation of this law.

AB 2723 (Laird) Consumer warranties: service and repair -- Manufacturers of a consumer product under warranty must now either replace or reimburse the purchase and installation price, minus use, if the good cannot be serviced or repaired because of its method of installation.

AB 2840 (Corbett) Vehicle rental agreements: electronic surveillance technology -- Car rental companies are now prohibited from using electronic surveillance technology to access or obtain any information relating to use of a rental vehicle.

DOMESTIC PARTNERS



AB 205 (Goldberg) Domestic Partner Rights and Responsibilities Act -- The provisions of the California Domestic Partner Rights and Responsibilities Act, signed in 2003, became effective in January. Registered domestic partners will now receive all rights, benefits, and obligations of married persons under state law, with the exception of those rights, benefits, and obligations accorded only to married persons by federal law, the California Constitution, or initiative statutes.

AB 2208 (Kehoe) Health Care And Insurance Benefits -- Beginning this year, all insurers, including health, life, auto and homeowners, will be required to offer the same coverage to domestic partners if they currently offer such benefits to spouses.

ENVIRONMENT



AB 2514 (Natural Resources Committee Bill) -- The annual voluntary renewal fee for environmental ("personalized") license plates will increase from \$25 to \$30. The enhanced revenue will be used for ocean protection programs.

SB 1369 (Kuehl) Firebreaks -- The state now requires firebreaks of at least 100 feet around homes in areas where the state has state fire prevention and suppression responsibility. You also will need to provide your insurance carrier with proof of compliance with all applicable fire-prevention building standards.

MISCELLANEOUS

AB 1733 (Reyes) Cell Phone Subscribers -- Wireless telephone companies will now need to obtain written opt-in consent from customers before publishing wireless phone numbers in a directory, and will not be able to charge customers a fee for choosing not to be listed in a directory.

AB 1857 (Koretz) Declawing Exotic Cats -- It is now a misdemeanor, punished by a \$10,000 fine, to declaw exotic cats such as cougars, bobcats, lion and tigers.

PUBLIC HEALTH

AB 691 (Daucher) -- Requires skilled nursing facilities to offer annual flu immunizations to residents older than 65 years.



AB 2132 (Reyes) Self-Administration of Asthma Medication -- Allows students to carry and self-administer asthma medication if their school district receives written permission

from a health provider and parent or guardian.

SB 1159 (Vasconcellos) Pilot Syringe Access Program-- Would authorize local governments to participate in a five year pilot program, allowing pharmacists in their community to sell up to up to 10 sterile needles and syringes at a time, without a prescription to intravenous drug users.



PUBLIC SAFETY

AB 50 (Koretz) .50 caliber BMG rifles

It is now illegal to sell, possess or manufacture a .50-caliber BMG rifle without a state permit.

AB 488 (Parra) Megan's Law on the Internet-- Californians will be able to access information on registered sex offenders by going directly to the California Department of Justice's Website. Megan's Law was enacted in 1996, but the information could only be accessed by going to a local law enforcement office.

REVENUE & TAXATION

SB 1689 (Poochigian) Settlements: Armenian genocide.

Individuals or heirs of individuals who suffered persecution during the Armenian Genocide and have received restitution payments will be able to exclude that money from income taxes. Additionally, the restitution payment will not count toward establishing eligibility for disability income or student aid.

TRANSPORTATION



AB 2222 (Koretz) Boating Safety -- Due to the high risk of carbon monoxide poisoning, it is now unlawful to teak-surf, body-surf or occupy the swim platform or swim ladder of a boat when the engine is running. All boats sold in California, starting in May 2005, must include a sticker warning of the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning while boating.

AB 1854 (Sitman) Driving with Headlights -- Drivers must now use headlights in weather when conditions make it difficult to see another person or car at 1,000 feet or when the windshield wipers must be in continuous use.

AB 1878 (Chan) Motor Scooters -- Users of motor scooters must now obtain a valid Class C driver's license or instruction permit. The new also prohibits operating a scooter on a highway or off highway unless it has a properly maintained muffler.

AB 2237 (Parra) Speed Violations -- Drivers caught speeding over 100 mph will now be hit with new fines. The new law provides for a fine up to \$750 for a second conviction within three years. The fine increases up to \$1,000 per conviction for subsequent committed within five years of the first two.

AB 2683 (Lieber) Smog Check --The rolling exemption from Smog Check requirements for vehicles more than 30 model years old ends this year. Instead, the new rule only exempts vehicles manufactured prior to 1976 from smog check requirements.

SB 1500 (Speier) Lapsed Car Insurance -- Beginning next year, anyone who cancels or lets their car insurance lapse will have that information electronically transferred to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). Failure to correct the problem within 45 days will result in a suspended vehicle registration.

SB 1085 (Murray) -- It now is illegal for anyone to manufacture, purchase, possess, install, sale or distribute electronic devices designed to override traffic signals. Authorized emergency vehicles and public transit vehicles are exempted.